

## Message Text

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70

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-20 SS-20 NSC-10 EB-11 COME-00 PRS-01

USIA-15 SPC-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01

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R 240117Z NOV 73

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1057

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1488

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAGR, BEXP, CH

SUBJ: TRAVEL TO PRC BY HONG KONG AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE

REF: A) STATE 219958 B) HONG KONG 11012

1. VISIT BY HONG KONG CONGEN AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE CHAMPEAU TO PEKING WOULD BE WELCOMED BY USLO. IN ADDITION TO GUIDELINES OUTLINED PARA 4, REF A, HOWEVER, AND IN VIEW OF PRC SENSITIVITIES IN REGARD TO VISITS BY HONG KONG CONGEN OFFICERS, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT CHAMPEAU'S TRIP BE HANDLED CAREFULLY.

2. THE PRC WOULD NOT BE RECEPTIVE TO A REQUEST FOR TRAVEL TO OBSERVE AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS, AND IS UNLIKELY TO APPROVE ANY REQUEST FOR TRAVEL THAT IS OUT OF THE ORDINARY. INDEED, THE RESPONSIBILITIES CHAMPEAU HAS FOR REPORTING ON CHINESE AGRICULTURE SHOULD NOT BE EMPHASIZED DURING THE PROPOSED VISIT, SINCE THE CHINESE ARE EVIDENTLY SENSITIVE TO REPORTING DONE FROM HONG KONG ON PRC AFFAIRS. ALSO, IT MIGHT BE UNWISE IF WE SHOULD INDICATE TO THE CHINESE THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT IS TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE CEREALS AND OILS CORPORATION.

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3. NEVERTHELESS, THE VISIT WOULD BE USEFUL AND COULD

ACCOMPLISH THE OBJECTIVES SOUGHT BY USDA IF PLAYED IN LOW KEY. OUR SUGGESTION IS THAT WE SIMPLY NOTIFY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS THAT CHAMPEAU WILL VISIT USLO ON CONSULTATION. WHEN HE ARRIVES IN PEKING, WE WOULD REQUEST COURTESY CALLS AT THE CEREALS AND OILS CORPORATION AND AT THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. (CONVERSATIONS DURING SUCH COURTESY CALLS OFTEN EXTEND TO COVER SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS.) WE WOULD ALSO, AFTER CHAMPEAU ARRIVES IN PEKING, SUBMIT A REQUEST FOR HIM TO MAKE ONE OR TWO STOPS (FOR EXAMPLE, AT SHANGHAI AND CANTON) WHILE EN ROUTE BACK TO HONG KONG. ASSUMING THIS IS APPROVED, IT SHOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT AT SUCH STOPS TO ARRANGE VISITS TO COMMUNES VIA THE CHINA TRAVEL SERVICE. ALSO, THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM FOR CHAMPEAU TO ARRANGE TRAVEL BETWEEN HONG KONG, PEKING, AND THE STOPS MENTIONED ABOVE BY TRAIN.

4. SUCH A VISIT SHOULD AFFORD CHAMPEAU AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT AT USLO, MEET CHINESE OFFICIALS, AND OBTAIN IMPRESSIONS OF CHINA'S COUNTRYSIDE. IF THIS SUGGESTION MEETS WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE DEPARTMENT, WE ARE PREPARED TO SUBMIT A REQUEST TO THE MFA.

5. AS A FINAL NOTE, WE WISH TO POINT OUT THAT WINTER MAY NOT BE THE BEST TIME TO OBSERVE AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS IN CHINA, PARTICULARLY IN THE PEKING AREA. WE ARE WILLING TO PROCEED AT THIS TIME, BUT USDA AND THE CONGEN MAY WISH TO CONSIDER POSTPONING THE PROPOSED VISIT UNTIL THE SPRING, WHICH MAY BE A BETTER SEASON TO ASSESS PRC CROP CONDITIONS AND WHICH MAY HAVE THE ADDED BENEFIT OF ENABLING CHAMPEAU TO STOP BRIEFLY AT THE CANTON FAIR.  
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